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INDEPENDENT IN ALL THINGS.

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SOMETHING ABOUT JUTE.

Editors Press:—I am frequently asked for information on the culture of the jute plant and the preparation of the fiber; where seed is to be had etc. With your permission I will take this method of giving what information I have on the subject through medium of the Press. I have never seen jute in cultivation; all that I know about it has been gained by correspondence and the reports of the Agricultural Department at Washington, from which I infer that the plant can be grown in California to as great perfection as it ever grow in India.

In the year 1870 the Agricultural Department at Washington, distributed jute seed in small quantities through the Southern States. The next year the Department was furnished with favorable accounts of the plant, but the planters were still at a loss as to the best mode of planting the seed, harvesting the crop, separating the fiber from the stem, etc. Hon. E. H. Derbey of Boston, addressed a letter to Mr. R. McAlister, then residing in Calcutta, and received the following:

The seed is sown in the month of March and April, broadcast on prepared ground, preference being given to moist, high ground situated if convenient on the bank of a river and somewhat sandy. It is not necessary to irrigate the ground, as no more water is required than is sufficient to keep the roots moist. It is allowed to grow three to four months and is cut in the months of June and July and August, when it has attained the height of eight to twelve feet; the size depending on the soil and season. The time for cutting is just after the flowers have turned to seed and before the seed begins to ripen. When cut, the stalks are tied in small bundles and thrown into tanks of dirty water and allowed to remain there five to eight days to rot, at the experation of which time they are taken out and the fiber falls from the stalk. It is then hung up to dry, and when dry it is sorted, packed in round bundles called drums, and sent to market. If all the plants were allowed to ripen the yield of seed would be about 120 lbs. per acre. The quantity of seed required to be planted is 30 to 40 lbs. per acre.

I am not prepared to give information where jute seed can be had at this time, but would suggest that Mr. Sussman, the Secretary of the Pacific Jute Company, San Francisco would be likely to know and assist in procuring seed.

There are several other methods of separating the fiber from the stalk, than the one given by Mr. McAlister, but as yet there is no machine invented to separate the fiber from the stem, for the reason that there has not been any demand for it yet. Jute must be raised in some considerable quantities, and the necessity for a machine be apparent before the attention of inventors and machinists will be generally attracted to it.

The planters have been very cautious about venturing into the cultivation of jute on account of having to compete with the cheap labor of India; but if we are not misinformed it can be made profitable in California where there is a local demand for 20,000 tons per annum, with a fair prospect that within a few years the demand will reach 50,000 or 60,000 tons. Admitting that we use the primitive method of the natives of India, and obtain the fibers by hand labor, we save the freight from India, and duty, commission, insurance, etc. The same people picked the seed from cotton for hundreds of years by hand until American ingenuity made the cotton-gin. It is just as reasonable to suppose that we will invent a machine that will more than compete with the cheap labor of India just so soon as there is a demand for it.

For further information as to the probable profits of jute culture, I refer those who entertain the idea of growing jute to the reports of the Commissioner of Agriculture from 1871 to 1878; there is much information in all the reports.

Prof. Waterhouse of Washington University, St. Louis, has written a very interesting article on the importance of the culture of jute. After visiting the jute-growing country in India he is well prepared to give information. He says the trials that have been made strengthen hope into an assuarance that jute can be successfully cultivated in the Gulf States and in southern California. Again he says, what has been so successfully accomplished in Dundee can be done with still greater success in the United States. We cannot only spin and weave the fiber, but we can also raise it; we not only can derive the profits of making the fabrics, but we can also enrich ourselves by the twofold economies of the growth and manufacture of the staple. Again he says: During the last five years about 170,000,000 pounds of jute were made into paper in the United States. The new-papers of the United States ought actively to promote an undertaking the success of which would so greatly rebound to their own advantage.

In conclusion I would recommend to those having suitable land and a disposition to try it, that they get seed in quantity enough to make it an object, go at it with the intention of making money and doing a good thing for the State. There is good land to grow jute in Fresno and Kern counties, as well as many thousands of acres elsewhere in the State that will produce it profitably.

—*Wm. H. Rector, in the M. & S. Press.*

There is growing on the Colorado River a plant which is known here as wild hemp. All its characteristics accord with the above description of jute; matures at the same season, and yields a similar percentage of fiber, the commercial value of which, is eight cents per pound, for a properly cleaned article.

Now, when it is considered that an immense area (counting by square miles) is covered with this plant; that in seed time, the high winds scatter it in every direction, and the following overflows of the river are constantly aiding its re-production; with river and rail transportation at the very door, it seems strange, indeed, that some level headed attempt is not made for working up a quantity into bagging, on the spot, and thereby determine whether this article, which costs nothing to produce, can be utilized to a profit.

A SELF MADE MAN.

The Reward of Honest Industry is sometimes slow, but sure.

A most Enviable Position obtained by faithfulness to duty.

A. N. TOWNE.

I want to tell the boys about a friend of mine whose faithful performance of present duty led him into higher positions than he ever dreamed of filling, and gave him what we would all like to reach—honor and success.

In the years of my experience as a printer in Chicago, more than twenty years ago, our firm did a good deal of printing for the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, and because of this I came to know a young man who is the subject of my story.

He came from Massachusets; he was poor, and had no influential friends to even give him a letter of recommendation. He sought employment on the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, and, after waiting a time, at last secured a position as brakeman on a freight train—salary only thirty dollars a month. He was faithful to his position, and being both intelligent and industrious, he was soon made a conductor on the train, with wages nearly doubled. He very soon attracted tracted the attention of his superior officers, who saw in him an honest, faithful, conscientious conductor, one not seeking his own ease or pleasure, but constantly devoted to the interests of the company that employed him, so not many months elapsed before he was made conductor of a passenger train—a more comfortable position, and one yielding a higher salary. Here I first knew him, a modest, quiet, unassuming young man, free from the popular vices, and one who tried to be just as faithful and true, and devoted to his work as a conductor as though the position had been that of general superintendent.

He did not apparently have a high opinion of his own abilities; there was a total absence of that swagger and strut so often seen in those who come to similar subaltern positions. It seemed as though to properly conduct his train, to secure the comfort of his passengers and rightly serve the interests of his company, required the full exercise of all the powers God had given him.

One of the sternest and most exacting, and yet one of the noblest, blest and most conscientious men that ever filled a similar position was then General Superintendent of the road. This man, Gol. G. C. Hammond, watched every employe of the road with an eagle eye. He measured every man, knew the ability of each, and seemed intuitively to know the faithful workers from the shirks. Our young conductor did not escape his keen eye. When he least thought of it, his chief was measuring and sounding him, and finding out what kind of metal he was made of. But no one ever knew whether he was approved or not, for the chief's look was always stern and cold as ice.

On Friday night the train No. 4 moved slowly out of Chicago under the care of my young friend, who only intent on doing his work as well as he knew how, seemed to have no higher ambition than to be a good conductor—salary nine hundred dollars a year. About noon, when he stopped at a station, he found a telegram from the head officer, ordering him to leave the train in charge of——, and take the first train for Chicago.

This was an unusual thing. Wondering what was the matter; conscious that he had tried to do exactly right, and yet remembering how exacting was the General Superintendent, he feared that unintentionally he had fallen under his displeasure. Reaching Chicago late Saturday evening, he found Col. Hammond had gone home, and knowing how strict he was in his observance of the Sabbath, the conductor waited patiently for the coming Monday morning, when, with a fearful heart, he presented himself at the office of the Superintendent.

"Good morning Mr. Hammond; I've answered your telegram, and come to see what it means."

"Good morning," growled the chief; "I see you have sir. I have concluded to take your train away from you."

The conductor's heart sank lower than ever. What before was only fearful foreboding was now painful truth. He had served the company to the best of his ability; he had kept the affairs of his train in complete order; his reports had been carefully and correctly made; and yet, after all, he had lost his position, he knew not why, and felt that his case was sad indeed. He inwardly resolved that, having missed his calling, he would quit railroading and try some other service, where faithful work would be appreciated. He dared not hope to reverse the decision of the official, yet in as calm a voice as he could command, he politely asked the reason of his summary dismissal.

Colonel Hammond waited awhile before he answered. Then the muscles of his face relaxed a little and he said:

"I want an Assistant Superintendent in my office, and have called you to take the place."

True worth is always modest, and our thunderstruck conductor could only stammer:

"But I am not competent sir, to fill the position you offer."

"You can do as I tell you; you can obey orders, and carry out the details of the work laid out by the chief."

To these duties he brought the same thoroughness and faithfulness that had made him noticeable as a conductor. His elevation did not make him vain or spoil him. He was as plain and modest and hardworking as before—the salary was one thousand eight hundred dollars.

After a few years of service under Col. Hammond, and an advance of salary to two thousand five hundred dollars, the plain young man was invited to take the office of General Superintendent of a new road, at a salary of four thousand dollars. Distrusting his own ability, but determined to do his best, he accepted the call, and succeeded, until the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, realizing how much they had lost in parting with him, invited him to resume his old position, with the tempting offer of six thousand a year.

In the meantime Col. Hammond had become Superintendent of the Union Pacific road, running from Omaha to Ogden, where it connects with the Central Pacific road. The latter road was owned by four or five millionaires, who had built it, one of whom was its General Superintendent. However good a business man, he knew but little about railroading, and under his care the road was anything but prosperous, until the owners and directors resolved upon a radical and sweeping change.

But where could they find a general superintendent who had the ability and would dare to reorganize the road and put its affairs upon a better basis? They consulted Col. Hammond and other railroad men and the result was that most unexpectedly our modest and hard working conductor one day received a telegram, asking him if he would undertake the duties of general superintendent of the Central Pacific road at a salary of ten thousand dollars. He was satisfied with his appreciation by the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, who proposed to increase his pay to seven thousand dollars, and as he preferred to remain in Chicago, he declined the princely offer made by the California road. Then another telegram asked at what salary he would become the Chief of the Central Pacific.

Almost hoping to discourage his tempters, he telegraphed:

"Thirteen thousand a year in gold."

At once came the answer:

"Accepted."

So, taken in his own trap, he had nothing to do but bid adieu to the city that had served him so well, and turn his face toward the land of gold. My story would be too long if I should try to tell you the unexpected difficulties he encountered from the old officers of the road, who had determined that they would not be superceded; and that the new superintendent should never enter upon his duties; how they, before his arrival, set the whole press and people of California against him; how, supported by the directors of the road, he quietly took control, conquered submission and was successful.

This was nine years ago. He is still General Superintendent of the Central Pacific, one of the most important railroads in the world. With its connection with California, this quiet man now superintends 734 miles of railroad, and over fifty connecting steamboats, besides dictating the tariffs of the China, the Australian and the Panama line of steamships. While other young men preferred present ease and comfort to the interest of their employers, wasted time in billiard halls and theatres and drinking saloons, Albion N. Towne was at work building up character as well as reputation, and instead of $360 a year as brakeman on a freight train, he now draws the 'comfortable salary of $20,000 a year in gold.

"Lucky man," said one.

"Luck" had but very little to do with it; faithfulness in the performance of present duties, however humble, did the most.

His untiring faithfulness in the humble duties not only attracted the notice and won the appreciation of his superiors, but fitted him for the higher positions which, without his seeking, he was called upon to fill.

I have long desired to tell this story of a young man's faithfulness and consequent success, for I consider it a lesson that boys and young men of the day can study to advantage.—*Alfred L. Small.*

[From the Miner.]

Forty bars of bullion received yesterday from the Silver Belt mine.

The late flood swept away the dams at Marion's ranche, and also those at the Verde.

In the case of Mrs. Alexander vs. the Peck Mining Company, the jury found for the plaintiff in the sum of $60,000.

We learn that Mr C C. Bean has purchased, for a New York company, the smelter at Walnut Grove, and that it is his intention to have it immediately renovated and moved to the neighborhood of a large copper ledge in the vicinity. As soon as the smelter can be put in condition, it is the intention of the company to commence reduction of these copper ores, which are said to be very rich, running as high as 80 per cent, with a small percentage of silver. The ledge is wide and the supply of ore practically inexhaustible.